

WHO'S BUYING YOU?



UNTIL YOU \$ELL YOUR\$ELF,
YOU WON'T \$ELL MUCH

MACK STORY

Who's Buying You?

Until You Sell Yourself, You
Won't Sell Much

Mack Story

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ISBN-13: 978-1544656588

DEDICATION

To all of those who choose to sell with integrity.
In memory of a true sales professional, Matt Lynott.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the salespeople I've encountered throughout my life who simply tried to help me get what I wanted...whether they had it or not. It was a pleasure doing business with you all. I've referred you and mentioned you to others many times.

1

THE FOUNDATION OF SELLING

WHEN YOU INCREASE YOUR INFLUENCE, YOU WILL INCREASE YOUR SALES

*“If you work hard on your job you can make a living.
But, if you work hard on yourself, you can
make a fortune.” ~ Jim Rohn*

Influence is the foundation of selling. If you have enough influence, you will get the sale. If you don't, you won't. If you have enough influence, you will get referrals. If you don't, you won't. If you have enough influence, you will get repeat customers. If you don't, you won't. As Bob Burg said, *“All things being equal, people will do business with and refer business to those people they know, like, and trust.”*

Everything in sales rises and falls on influence. With influence, you will thrive. Without it, you will take a dive.

When someone buys from you, you have successfully influenced them to make two purchases. They first buy YOU. Then, they buy the product or service from you.

The lessons and principles found on the pages of this book are meant to motivate and inspire you to work hard on yourself. As a result, you will increase your positive influence in all situations and with everyone. If you do, your *“fortune”* will follow. If you don't, someone else will enjoy your piece of the sales pie. The old saying *“If you snooze, you lose.”* comes to mind.

Influence is what I'm passionate about. I'll begin by

sharing with you what truly qualifies me to write this little book on sales. Everything I read about, write about, think about, and speak about relates to principles of character-based, positive influence. Or as it applies to sales, it's all about integrity and character-based selling. I define leadership as one of my mentors, John C. Maxwell, defines leadership, "*Leadership is influence.*"

In 2008, I committed to becoming a lifetime student of character-based, positive influence. As a result, I have multiplied my hourly rate since then by a factor of 228. That's based on what I was earning per hour in 2008 compared to what I have earned for my best hour since then. And, my rates continue to climb.

Let me simplify this a bit more to reveal how my character multiplied my competency. From 1988 to 2008, 20 years of working hard on my job, my hourly rate increased five times while gaining experience in my field (competency) and earning a college degree (more competency) which was required for better jobs. From 2008 to 2017, less than 10 years of working hard on myself, my hourly rate has increased 228 times while focusing only on learning and applying character-based principles of influence. I learned how to sell MYSELF.

Don't miss it. My result to date is: $5 \times 228 = 1,140$.

I want to help you achieve amazing results too, but you've got to do the hard work on yourself as Jim Rohn stated so well. My intent is to help you learn to use *who you are* to leverage *what you know*.

In the context of sales, I have received strong five figure speaking fees to speak on the subject of influence. I don't consider myself a sales professional. However, I am an influence professional. Or in my terms, I'm a leadership professional. By influencing others to pay many thousands of dollars to hear me speak, I have

become an expert in selling my most important product: ME. We are all selling something. The first and most important thing we *must* all sell is ourselves.

You must develop your competency. But, that is only a small part of the equation as Napoleon Hill explains here, *“The average person who wanted to get an education would probably think first of some college or university, with the false belief that these institutions could ‘educate’ their students...Don’t believe for a moment that you can buy an education for money. You can’t do it. An education is something you have to work for. Furthermore, it cannot be acquired in the usual four years given over to college training. If we are good students, we are going to school always. We never get through. Life is one continuous school, and the kind of students we are depends upon the kind of work we do as we go through this great university.”*

A four year degree may take you to the base of the mountain of success, but it will take a lifetime of growth and development to get you to the top. If you're not yet a student of leadership (influence), I hope after reading this book you will become one.

Leadership is influence, and influence sells.

SELLER BEWARE

- 1. You must increase your influence in order to increase your sales. More influence leads to more options!*
- 2. You must intentionally work hard on yourself, not your job, to reach your full potential. Be more!*
- 3. Your competency will take you part of the way, but it is your character that will take you all of the way.*

2

SELLER BEWARE

TODAY, BUYERS ARE OFTEN MORE INFORMED THAN SELLERS

“Sales persuasion and influence, moving others, has changed more in the last 10 years than it has in the last 100 years. It has transitioned from buyer beware to seller beware.” ~ Daniel Pink

“It’s no longer buyer beware. Today, it’s seller beware.” I remember when I first heard Daniel Pink speak these words several years ago. They stuck with me.

At the time, I had never considered writing a book for sales professionals. After all, I don’t consider myself a fan of, or knowledgeable about, popular selling or marketing techniques and practices. However, I am highly effective when it comes to influencing people based on my character, my ability to quickly connect with them, my ability to build trust, and my ability to make them feel valued. In other words, *I can sell myself.*

To be completely transparent, I don’t look forward to meeting, interacting, or dealing with salespeople who have been trained on and have bought into the personality-based techniques and practices of *how to appear to be* instead of focusing on character-based principles related to *how to actually be.*

Everything I read about, learn about, teach about, and speak about is related to character-based development. Daniel’s words resonated with me. They have been on my

mind since that very day, "*It's no longer buyer beware. Today, it's seller beware.*"

Since hearing those words, I have shared them many times with sales professionals. Why? Because I like to help people excel, reach their goals, unleash their potential, and make things happen for themselves and for their families.

There's no denying it. Today, the buyer does have the advantage over the seller. Not sometime, every time. Most often, the buyer is holding their advantage in their hand. It's called a smart phone.

Today, the buyer can connect to the internet and learn everything about your product and your competition before they ever meet you and hear your well-rehearsed sales pitch. Actually, depending on your product and your marketing methods, they may be able to experience your sales pitch and your style on video before they ever meet you. The quality, and *what they feel about you* while watching the video, will determine if you actually get to meet them or if you never get to meet them.

Today, the buyer's first impression of you may very well be your online presence or your lack of an online presence. They can often read reviews by other buyers who have experience with your company, your product, and yes, sometimes even with you. They can also stalk you on various social media platforms to see who you *really* are when you're not trying to sell something.

Today, the buyer can compare features and prices instantly. Maybe while they are standing in front of you. In many cases, they will let you invest your time showing and demonstrating the product. Then, they will choose to bypass you altogether by purchasing from someone else or by purchasing online.

I'm sure you get the point by now and can reflect on

your own experiences and quickly agree. Today, the buyer absolutely has the advantage on all fronts.

The one major advantage you still have is YOU!

IF they like you. *IF* they trust you. *IF* they feel you want to help them. *IF* they want to buy from you. *IF* they want to speak positively about you to others. And *IF* they do, it's all because of YOU. You are the key to your success.

This book will provide unique insights in bite-size pieces to help you leverage your advantage, not over the buyer, but over your competition: those who are selling what you're selling and trying to steal your buyers.

My purpose on these pages is to help you sell yourself, not your products. Until you're able to sell yourself effectively, you won't have to worry too much about selling your products. As Ralph Marston said, *"Truly appreciate those around you, and you'll soon find many others around you."* The more people you attract, the more product you will sell. *Word of mouth* sells.

SELLER BEWARE

- 1. Your customers are better informed today than they have ever been. Your character is your advantage!*
- 2. You can't compete with those who are online if you're not online. Think about your marketing methods!*
- 3. Your real competition is the character of those who are selling what you're selling. YOU are the advantage!*

3

WORD OF MOUTH

WHAT ARE THE PEOPLE YOU MEET SAYING ABOUT YOU?

“The more valuable you become, the more the marketplace will reward you. Give first. Become known as a resource, not a salesperson. Your value is linked to your knowledge and your willingness to help others.” ~ Jeffrey Gitomer

When it comes to spreading the word about a product or service, everyone knows there is nothing more effective than *word of mouth advertising*. When others endorse a product with enthusiasm and passion, tell us what they love about it, and tell us why we've just got to have it, we are far more likely to consider making a purchase than if we're exposed to traditional advertising about a product or service.

Word of mouth is even more effective when people are not satisfied. Most often, if we hear just one bad review, we immediately start looking at alternative products or providers. We truly pay attention when someone shares about a bad experience with a product, service, or a salesperson.

Word of mouth advertising will always trump other forms of advertising. Why? Because we trust those we know much more than we trust those we don't know.

You don't have any control over the *word of mouth* advertising about the product you're selling. The

perceived value, quality, and performance of the product will determine what people are saying about it. The design, engineering, and manufacturing teams are responsible for that.

This book isn't about products. It's about people because everyone makes their money selling a product, a service, or themselves. Everyone is selling something.

As you read the rest of this book, forget about products and services. What you need to consider and think about is simply this: *word of mouth* advertising applies to YOU too. ALL the people who interact with you, personally and professionally, will have an opinion of you. That opinion matters. And, if you're a salesperson, it matters a lot!

Here's why. As John C. Maxwell stated so well, "*One of the worst mistakes a person can make is to think they are working for someone else. They may be getting paid by someone else. But, they are working for themselves.*" I totally agree and dedicated an entire chapter to helping others understand this key principle of success in my book, *MAXIMIZE Your Potential: Unleashing the LEADER Within*.

If you're selling for free, then you *are* working for someone else because they are benefiting financially, and you're not. But, if you're selling with the expectation of being paid to sell, then you are absolutely working for yourself. YOU *are* in business for yourself. When you understand this principle, *word of mouth* becomes even more important. It's impacting your business: YOU.

YOU are now the primary product that must be sold. YOU are the sole salesperson. YOU can be referred by many, but YOU can only be sold by one. You are 100% responsible for the perceived value, quality, and performance of the most important product you'll ever sell: YOURSELF.

This entire book is based on this one simple principle: YOU *are* working for yourself. Your sales will rise or fall based on your ability to influence other people.

People who never plan to buy from you will have an opinion of YOU. People who don't have a need for your product can and will provide good or bad *word of mouth* for you. People who you meet only once may advertise for you. People you socialize with but don't sell to will have an opinion of YOU. Those who consider buying from you will have an opinion of you. Those who do buy your products or services will have an opinion of YOU.

What will all of these people say about YOU?

I have no idea, but what I do know is this. Who YOU *are* will determine most, if not all, of what they say. They may not always remember what you said or what you did. But, they won't forget how you made them feel. That feeling will influence the *word of mouth* feedback you receive from them.

People are sensitive creatures. I know, you're probably tough, but you can easily validate this principle. How did the last person you were with make you feel? How did your boss make you feel? How did the last salesperson make you feel? Now, the two most important questions. How did you make them feel? Do you care? I hope so because they will all be providing you with *word of mouth*. I hope it's all good, but it's not up to me. It's up to YOU!

SELLER BEWARE

1. *You determine your own word of mouth advertising. It will either make you or break you. Think about it!*
2. *You are selling yourself 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. You're never closed!*
3. *Every person you ever meet will form an opinion about your business: YOU! Will they refer you or reject you?*

4

WHO'S BUYING YOU?

UNTIL YOU SELL YOURSELF,
YOU WON'T SELL MUCH

“When you decide to pursue greatness, you are taking responsibility for your life. This means you are choosing to accept the consequences of your actions, and to become the agent of your mental, physical, spiritual, and material success. You may not always be able to control what life puts in your path, but I believe you can always control who you are.”

~ Les Brown

I want to help you win by helping you sell yourself. Everything you will learn throughout this book is intended to help you intentionally create more positive *word of mouth*. When you do this, you will win at a much higher level and for a much longer time.

However, there's one thing I can't help you with. It's critical to effectively making the sale. I'm referring to passion. If you're going to earn your money selling, you need to stack the odds in your favor. Passion is a must.

Passion sells. Are you passionate? Are you passionate about the product or service you're selling and the company you're selling it for? If not, you have a significant disadvantage when compared to someone who can answer with an authentic “*Yes!*” If you're not passionate about what you're selling, you're either selling the wrong product or working at the wrong company.

Why would you create such a disadvantage for yourself? You're losing sales and dollars whether you know it or not. Make a course correction as soon as possible. Having a passion for the product and the company will give you an edge over those who don't. As Dan Burns said so well, *"Find your passion and wrap your career around it."* If you do, everything else will take care of itself.

Imagine you're considering buying from two salespeople at two different companies selling a similar product. You're happy with either product and either brand. It's no longer about the product. It's now about the salesperson. You're actually happy with both of them too. As far as you're concerned, they are both exceptional in all areas except in the area of passion. One is neutral and seems to care less if you actually buy the product. The other has you so fired up you're thinking about buying two, and you now believe everyone else needs one also.

Everything is the same, except the salesperson's passion for the product and the company. Who do you buy from? Who do you give positive *word of mouth*? Who gets no *word of mouth*? Or worse, who gets negative *word of mouth*?

The one who lost the sale may never know why. They won't get referrals in the future and won't hear the bad *word of mouth* after the sale was lost. Missed sales due to lack of passion simply may never be known. For the loser, the thought may be that business is just slow.

Lack of passion can cost you short term and long term. I'm sure Reggie Leach had passion in mind when he said, *"Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must first set yourself on fire."* Passion fuels the fire.

Success doesn't begin with making the sale. Success

begins before the sale. Success begins with who you are and why you do what you do. I believe sales guru Jeffrey Gitomer nailed it when he said, *“Many salespeople believe that customers buy their products and services first. Incorrect. The first thing prospects buy is the salesperson. The first sale made is you.”*

Most often, in order to sell yourself, you must get everything right. When it comes to selling yourself, one area of weakness can, and often will, cost you the sale.

My intent on the following pages is to help you think deeply about what it will take to truly get to the next level and beyond. For most people, it’s not a lack of knowledge. It’s a lack of awareness. As we begin to dig deeper together, I’m reminded of the great little poem titled *“Thinking”* by Walter D. Wintle:

“If you think you are beaten, you are; If you think you dare not, you don’t; If you like to win, but think you can’t, it is almost certain you won’t. If you think you’ll lose, you’ve lost. For out of the world, we find success begins with a fellow’s will. It’s all in the state of mind. If you think you’re outclassed, you are. You’ve got to think high to rise. You’ve got to be sure of yourself before you can ever win a prize. Life’s battles don’t always go to the stronger or faster man; But sooner or later the man who wins is the man who thinks he can.”

SELLER BEWARE

- 1. The first and most important thing you will sell is yourself. The sell starts long before the sale starts.*
- 2. If you aren't passionate about the product you're selling, you're likely to lose the sale to someone who is.*
- 3. Knowledge is important, but it's awareness that causes you to seek the appropriate knowledge.*

5

WHY SHOULD I BUY FROM YOU?

THE UNSPOKEN QUESTION EVERY CUSTOMER WANTS ANSWERED

“People buy personalities as much as merchandise, and it is a question if they are not influenced more by the personalities with which they come in contact than they are by the merchandise.” ~ Napoleon Hill

Why should I buy from YOU? What is it about YOU? I know you're a rock star. I get it. All salespeople believe they are rock stars. So, let's move past that. Or at least, let's break it down a bit because in the sales world, every team has a rock star: the salesperson with the most sales.

Rock star is a relative term. There's a BIG difference between being the best on your team, in your company, and in your industry. You may be a rock star on your team, but an unknown backup singer in your industry.

Don't make the mistake of measuring yourself against your peers. What do they have to do with you anyway? If you want a real challenge, do what the true rock stars in your industry do. Measure yourself against your potential.

Your potential is what you are truly capable of. Are you training to reach your potential like an Olympic athlete trains to win a gold medal? You against you.

You must decide how far you want to go. Sacrifice will be required. Give up habits that aren't serving you. Turn off the TV, quit playing games on your phone, stop surfing social media, and quit goofing off all weekend

with too many cold beverages.

Create habits that will help you reach your goals. Get up early, stay up late, network like that's all you have to do, implement a personal development and growth plan, and get serious about making things happen for yourself. That's what true rock stars do.

Most salespeople, or anyone else for that matter, won't make the choices that will allow them to reach their potential. When you measure yourself against your potential, your scores drop tremendously. That's the score that reflects the truth about how you're really doing.

This brings us back to the question: Why would someone choose YOU over your competition?

As you ponder this simple but thought-provoking question, don't make the mistake of looking at yourself through rose colored "seller" glasses. It's the buyers who decide if they will buy from you or someone else. You can only influence their decision. You can't determine their decision. Therefore, you may want to look at the question again through the eyes of the buyer.

There is often a blind spot between us and the mirror. Stop and think about things from a buyer's perspective. Sure, you are in sales, but you are also a buyer. You make purchases just like the rest of us.

Consider the words of Ayn Rand, "*There is the man who wishes to be rich, but never thinks of discovering what means, actions, and conditions are required to achieve wealth.*" If you haven't already read that last quote five times, stop and do it now. Do it slowly with intentional thought.

I hope you thought deeply about the last half of that quote. That's where the money is. This book is one example of *means*. There are many different means. But knowing how isn't enough. The means must result in definite *actions*. If the definite actions are right, you *will*

create the right *conditions* that will allow you to achieve wealth. *Means, actions, and conditions.* You're responsible for all three. I can't do it for you, but everything I share in this book will help you make it happen.

Look at the following questions with “*buyer's*” glasses:

- *What do YOU look for in a salesperson?*
- *What makes a sales experience positive and memorable?*
- *What determines if you will refer a salesperson to family?*
- *What do you like about your favorite salesperson?*
- *What would you change about most salespeople?*

If you truly answered these questions using your “*buyer*” glasses, put your “*seller*” glasses back on and consider your answers. Can you honestly say you are the salesperson you just described? Whose interest do you primarily have in mind when selling? Yours or the buyer's? You will know it, but they will feel it.

If the customer is talking to you, they are interested in your product or service. But, that doesn't mean they were initially interested in buying from you. That's two completely different interests.

The mission is not to try and sell them something. The mission is to get them to want to buy something from YOU. Trust is the foundation of influence. Trust sells.

SELLER BEWARE

1. *You should measure yourself based on your potential, what you could and should be doing with your ability.*
2. *You are responsible for finding the means, taking the right actions, and creating the conditions for success.*
3. *You must become the salesperson everyone wants to buy from because of who you are, not how you are.*

6

ARE YOU TRUSTWORTHY?

IT'S ALL ABOUT WHO YOU ARE
AND WHAT YOU KNOW

“There is only one boss – the customer. He can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else.”
~ Sam Walton

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CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

7

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

THE CUSTOMER EXPECTS YOU TO KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT

“Standards of excellence are not chiseled in stone. They are constantly being redefined. It's important to recognize that what was graded as excellent last year may not be so this year. That is why we must keep mastering new skills.” ~ Bobb Beihl

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

8

LEVERAGE YOUR CHARACTER

YOUR CHARACTER WILL EITHER
LAUNCH YOU OR LIMIT YOU

*“Character isn’t something you were born with
and can’t change, like your fingerprints.
It’s something you weren’t born with and must
take responsibility for forming.” ~ Jim Rohn*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

9

WHAT'S YOUR MOTIVE?

YOUR INTENTION IS YOUR
FIRST IMPRESSION

*"There's no second chance to make a good
first impression." ~ John C. Maxwell*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

10

DON'T BE A SALESPUPPET

**THE BEST SALESPEOPLE MOTIVATE;
THE WORST SALESPEOPLE MANIPULATE**

“Nice guys may appear to finish last, but usually they are running a different race.” ~ Norman Vincent Peale

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

11

EMOTIONS RULE

ACTIONS ARE BASED ON EMOTIONS

“When dealing with people, you are not dealing with creatures of logic. You are dealing with creatures of emotion.” ~ Dale Carnegie

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

12

THINK SHORT TERM

I WANT THEM TO BUY FROM ME

*“Like leads to trust. Trust leads to buying.
Buying leads to relationship.” ~ Jeffrey Gitomer*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

13

THINK LONG TERM

I WANT THEM TO BUY FROM ME AGAIN

“If I try to use human influence strategies and tactics of how to get other people to do what I want, to work better, to be more motivated, to like me and each other - while my character is fundamentally flawed, marked by duplicity or insincerity - then, in the long run, I cannot be successful. My duplicity will breed distrust, and everything I do - even using so-called good human relations techniques - will be perceived as manipulative.” ~ Stephen R. Covey

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

14

AUTHENTICITY SELLS

**AUTHENTICITY IS ABOUT BEING,
NOT APPEARING TO BE**

“Into the hands of every individual is given a marvelous power for good or evil - the silent, unconscious, unseen influence of his life. This is simply the constant radiation of what man really is, not what he pretends to be.”
~ William George Jordan

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

15

TRUTH SELLS

DON'T TELL THEM WHAT THEY WANT
TO HEAR; TELL THEM THE TRUTH

*“The best thing about telling the truth is you never
have to think about what to say.” ~ Mark Twain*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

16

TRANSPARENCY SELLS

TRANSPARENCY IS TELLING
THE TRUTH WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE
TO SIMPLY BECAUSE YOU WANT TO

*“Our work, our relationships, and our lives succeed
or fail one conversation at a time.” ~ Susan Scott*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

17

INTEGRITY SELLS

MAKE AND KEEP COMMITMENTS

“You can't build a reputation on what you are going to do.” ~ Henry Ford

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

18

GRATITUDE SELLS

GRATITUDE ALLOWS YOU TO DEMONSTRATE
RESPECT AND TO SHOW APPRECIATION

*“Your success is measured, not by what the world
gives to you, but by what you give to the world.”
~ C. A. Munn*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

19

CONNECTION SELLS

CONNECTION LEVERAGES COMMUNICATION

“In order to communicate, we must be sure we are connecting. If we are connected, communication will be much easier and effective. If we are disconnected, it doesn't matter what we are communicating because the message isn't getting through.” ~ Ria Story

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

20

PRINCIPLES SELL

PRINCIPLES APPLY IN ALL SITUATIONS;
PRACTICES APPLY IN SOME SITUATIONS

“Principles are not invented by us or by society; they are the laws of the universe that pertain to human relationships and human organizations.

They are part of the human condition, consciousness, and conscience. To the degree people recognize and live in harmony with such basic principles as fairness, equity, justice, integrity, honesty, and trust, they move toward either survival and stability on the one hand or disintegration and destruction on the other.”

~ Stephen R. Covey

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

21

RAPPORT SELLS

WHEN YOU VALUE THE CUSTOMER,
THE CUSTOMER WILL VALUE YOU

*“You can't make the other fellow feel important in
your presence if you secretly feel that he is a nobody.”*
~ Les Giblin

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

22

HELPING SELLS

STOP SELLING; START HELPING

*“Try not to become men of success.
Rather, become men of value.” ~ Albert Einstein*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

23

RELATIONSHIPS SELL

UNTIL YOU SELL YOURSELF,
YOU CAN'T BUILD A RELATIONSHIP

“If you make a sale, you can earn a commission.

If you make a friend, you can earn a fortune.

This philosophy is rarely used in sales.

*Those who employ it are the top performers and the
top paid salespeople. They build relationships.”*

~ Jeffrey Gitomer

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

24

UNDERSTANDING SELLS

SQUINT WITH YOUR EARS;
LISTEN WITH YOUR EYES

*“How do we learn? 89% with our eyes, what we see.
10% with our ears, what we hear. The other 1%
of learning comes from the other senses.”
~ John C. Maxwell*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

25

SUPPORTING SELLS

WHEN YOU'RE THERE FOR YOUR
CUSTOMER, THEY'LL BE THERE FOR YOU

*“Service makes people feel honored, respected,
and special.” ~ Dee Ann Turner*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

26

ATTITUDE SELLS

DON'T WHINE...SHINE!

“Refuse to complain. Complaining is just a way of not taking responsibility, justifying doing nothing, and programming yourself to fail. Complaining creates the illusion that you have done something.”

~ Les Brown

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

27

RESPONSIBILITY SELLS

**LOSERS FIND AN EXCUSE;
WINNERS FIND A WAY**

“Solving complex problems requires an inquiring mind and the willingness to experiment one’s way to a fresh solution.” ~ Daniel Pink

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

28

NETWORKING SELLS

**NETWORKING IS ABOUT SELLING YOURSELF,
NOT YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**

*“You are a human magnet and you are constantly
attracting to you people whose character
harmonizes with your own.” ~ Napoleon Hill*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

29

WHAT IF THEY DON'T BUY?

DON'T FORGET:
YOU'LL STILL BE SELLING TOMORROW

*“How an individual plays the game shows part of
his character. How he loses shows all of it.”*

~ John C. Maxwell

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

30

SOLD!

NOW, IT'S TIME TO OVER DELIVER

“I don’t believe there is a thing of principle in connection with this success philosophy that will get an individual ahead so far and so fast and so definitely as the habit of going the extra mile; that is, doing something useful for other people and forgetting for the time being about what you’re going to get back in return. Going the extra mile means that you render more service and better service than you’re paid to render, but you do it all the time and in a fine, friendly spirit.” ~ Napoleon Hill

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mack's story is an amazing journey of personal and professional growth. He married Ria in 2001. He has one son, Eric, born in 1991.

After graduating high school in 1987, Mack joined the United States Marine Corps Reserve as an 0311 infantryman. Soon after, he began his 20 plus year manufacturing career. Graduating with highest honors, he earned an Executive Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Faulkner University.

Mack began his career in manufacturing in 1988 on the front lines of a large production machine shop. He eventually grew himself into upper management and found his niche in lean manufacturing and along with it, developed his passion for leadership. In 2008, he launched his own Lean Manufacturing and Leadership Development firm.

From 2005-2012, Mack led leaders and their cross-functional teams through more than 11,000 hours of process improvement, organizational change, and cultural transformation. Ria joined Mack full-time in late 2013.

In 2013, they worked with John C. Maxwell as part of an international training event focused on the Cultural Transformation in Guatemala where over 20,000 leaders were trained. They also shared the stage with internationally recognized motivational speaker Les Brown in 2014.

Mack and Ria have published 30+ books on personal growth and leadership development. In 2018, they were invited to speak at Yale University's School of Management. They also had over 80,000 international followers at the end of 2020 on LinkedIn where they provide daily motivational, inspirational, and leadership content to people around the world.

Mack and Ria inspire people everywhere through their example of achievement, growth, and personal development.

Clients: ATD (Association for Talent Development), Auburn University, Chevron, Chick-fil-A, Kimberly Clark, Koch Industries, Southern Company, and the U.S. Military.

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Excerpt from

***Defining Influence:
Increasing Your Influence Increases Your Options***

In *Defining Influence*, I outline the foundational leadership principles and lessons we must learn in order to develop our character in a way that allows us to increase our influence with others. I also share many of my personal stories revealing how I got it wrong many times in the past and how I grew from front-line factory worker to become a Motivational Leadership Speaker.

INTRODUCTION

When You Increase Your Influence, You Increase Your Options.

*“Leadership is influence. Nothing more. Nothing less.
Everything rises and falls on leadership.” ~ John C. Maxwell*

Everyone is born a leader. However, everyone is not born a high impact leader.

I haven't always believed everyone is a leader. You may or may not at this point. That's okay. There is a lot to learn about leadership.

At this very moment, you may already be thinking to yourself, *“I'm not a leader.”* My goal is to help you understand why everyone is a leader and to help you develop a deeper understanding of the principles of leadership and influence.

Developing a deep understanding of leadership has changed my life for the better. It has also changed the lives of my family members, friends, associates, and clients. My intention is to help you improve not only your

life, but also the lives of those around you.

Until I became a student of leadership in 2008 which eventually led me to become a John Maxwell Certified Leadership Coach, Trainer, and Speaker in 2012, I did not understand leadership or realize everyone can benefit from learning the related principles.

In the past, I thought leadership was a term associated with being the boss and having formal authority over others. Those people are definitely leaders. But, I had been missing something. All of the other seven billion people on the planet are leaders too.

I say everyone is born a leader because I agree with John Maxwell, *“Leadership is Influence. Nothing more. Nothing less.”* Everyone has influence. It’s a fact. Therefore, everyone is a leader.

No matter your age, gender, religion, race, nationality, location, or position, everyone has influence. Whether you want to be a leader or not, you are. After reading this book, I hope you do not question whether or not you are a leader. However, I do hope you question what type of leader you are and what you need to do to increase your influence.

Everyone does not have authority, but everyone does have influence. There are plenty of examples in the world of people without authority leading people through influence alone. Actually, every one of us is an example. We have already done it. We know it is true. This principle is self-evident which means it contains its own evidence and does not need to be demonstrated or explained; it is obvious to everyone: we all have influence with others.

As I mentioned, the question to ask yourself is not, *“Am I a leader?”* The question to ask yourself is, *“What type of leader am I?”* The answer: whatever kind you choose to

be. Choosing not to be a leader is not an option. As long as you live, you will have influence. You are a leader.

You started influencing your parents before you were actually born. You may have influence after your death. How? Thomas Edison still influences the world every time a light is turned on, you may do things in your life to influence others long after you're gone. Or, you may pass away with few people noticing. It depends on the choices you make.

Even when you're alone, you have influence.

The most important person you will ever influence is yourself. The degree to which you influence yourself determines the level of influence you ultimately have with others. Typically, when we are talking about leading ourselves, the word most commonly used to describe self-leadership is discipline which can be defined as giving yourself a command and following through with it. We must practice discipline daily to increase our influence with others.

"We must all suffer one of two things: the pain of discipline or the pain of regret or disappointment." ~ Jim Rohn

As I define leadership as influence, keep in mind the words leadership and influence can be interchanged anytime and anywhere. They are one and the same. Throughout this book, I'll help you remember by placing one of the words in parentheses next to the other occasionally as a reminder. They are synonyms. When you read one, think of the other.

Everything rises and falls on influence (leadership). When you share what you're learning, clearly define leadership as influence for others. They need to understand the context of what you are teaching and

understand they *are* leaders (people with influence) too. If you truly want to learn and apply leadership principles, you must start teaching this material to others within 24-48 hours of learning it yourself.

You will learn the foundational principles of leadership (influence) which will help you understand the importance of the following five questions. You will be able to take effective action by growing yourself and possibly others to a higher level of leadership (influence). Everything you ever achieve, internally and externally, will be a direct result of your influence.

- 1. *Why* do we influence?** – Our character determines *why* we influence. Who we are on the inside is what matters. Do we manipulate or motivate? It's all about our intent.
- 2. *How* do we influence?** – Our character, combined with our competency, determines *how* we influence. Who we are and what we know combine to create our unique style of influence which determines our methods of influence.
- 3. *Where* do we influence?** – Our passion and purpose determine *where* we have the greatest influence. What motivates and inspires us gives us the energy and authenticity to motivate and inspire others.
- 4. *Who* do we influence?** – We influence those *who* buy-in to us. Only those valuing and seeking what we value and seek will volunteer to follow us. They give us or deny us permission to influence them based on how well we have developed our character and competency.

- 5. *When do we influence?*** – We influence others *when* they want our influence. We choose when others influence us. Everyone else has the same choice. They decide when to accept or reject our influence.

The first three questions are about the choices we make as we lead (influence) ourselves and others. The last two questions deal more with the choices others will make as they decide first, *if* they will follow us, and second, *when* they will follow us. They will base their choices on *who we are* and *what we know*.

Asking these questions is important. Knowing the answers is more important. But, taking action based on the answers is most important. Cumulatively, the answers to these questions determine our leadership style and our level of influence (leadership).

On a scale of 1-10, your influence can be very low level (1) to very high level (10). But make no mistake, you *are* a leader. You *are* always on the scale. There is a positive and negative scale too. The higher on the scale you are the more effective you are. You will be at different levels with different people at different times depending on many different variables.

Someone thinking they are not a leader or someone that doesn't want to be a leader is still a leader. They will simply remain a low impact leader with low level influence getting low level results. They will likely spend much time frustrated with many areas of their life. Although they could influence a change, they choose instead to be primarily influenced by others.

What separates high impact leaders from low impact leaders? There are many things, but two primary differences are:

- 1) High impact leaders accept more responsibility in all areas of their lives while low impact leaders tend to blame others and transfer responsibility more often.
- 2) High impact leaders have more positive influence while low impact leaders tend to have more negative influence.

My passion has led me to grow into my purpose which is to help others increase their influence personally and professionally while setting and reaching their goals. I am very passionate and have great conviction. I have realized many benefits by getting better results in all areas of my life. I have improved relationships with my family members, my friends, my associates, my peers, and my clients. I have witnessed people within these same groups embrace leadership principles and reap the same benefits.

The degree to which I *live* what I teach determines my effectiveness. My goal is to learn it, live it, and *then* teach it. I had major internal struggles as I grew my way to where I am. I'm a long way from perfect, so I seek daily improvement. Too often, I see people teaching leadership but not living what they're teaching. If I teach it, I live it.

My goal is to be a better leader tomorrow than I am today. I simply must get out of my own way and lead. I must lead me effectively before I can lead others effectively, not only with acquired knowledge, but also with experience from applying and living the principles.

I'll be transparent with personal stories to help you see how I have applied leadership principles by sharing: How I've struggled. How I've learned. How I've sacrificed. And, how I've succeeded.

Go beyond highlighting or underlining key points. Take the time to write down your thoughts related to the

principle. Write down what you want to change. Write down how you can apply the principle in your life. You may want to consider getting a journal to fully capture your thoughts as you progress through the chapters. What you are thinking as you read is often much more important than what you're reading.

Most importantly, do not focus your thoughts on others. Yes, they need it too. We all need it. I need it. You need it. However, if you focus outside of yourself, you are missing the very point. Your influence comes from within. Your influence rises and falls based on your choices. You have untapped and unlimited potential waiting to be released. Only you can release it.

You, like everyone else, were born a leader. Now, let's take a leadership journey together.

(If you enjoyed this Introduction to *Defining Influence*, it is available in paperback, audio, and as an eBook on Amazon.com or for a signed copy you can purchase at TopStoryLeadership.com.)

Excerpt from

10 Values of High Impact Leaders

Our values are the foundation upon which we build our character. I'll be sharing 10 values high impact leaders work to master because they know these values will have a tremendous impact on their ability to lead others well. You may be thinking, "*Aren't there more than 10 leadership values?*" Absolutely! They seem to be endless. And, they are all important. These are simply 10 key values which I have chosen to highlight.

Since leadership is very dynamic and complex, the more values you have been able to internalize and utilize synergistically together, the more effective you will be. The more influence you will have.

"High performing organizations that continuously invest in leadership development are now defining new 21st century leadership models to deal with today's gaps in their leadership pipelines and the new global business environment. These people-focused organizations have generated nearly 60% improved business growth, reported a 66% improvement in bench strength, and showed a 62% improvement in employee retention. And, our research shows that it is not enough to just spend money on leadership training, but rather to follow specific practices that drive accelerated business results." ~ Josh Bersin

Do you want to become a high impact leader?

I believe everyone is a leader, but they are leading at different levels.

I believe everyone can and should lead from *where they are*.

I believe everyone can and should make a high impact.

I believe growth doesn't just happen; we must make it happen.

I believe before you will invest in yourself you must first believe in yourself.

I believe leaders must believe in their team before they will invest in their team.

I truly believe *everything rises and falls on influence*.

There is a story of a tourist who paused for a rest in a small town in the mountains. He went over to an old man sitting on a bench in front of the only store in town and inquired, "Friend, can you tell me something this town is noted for?"

"Well," replied the old man, "I don't rightly know except it's the starting point to the world. You can start here and go anywhere you want."¹

That's a great little story. We are all at "the starting point" to the world, and we "can start here and go anywhere we want." We can expand our influence 360° in all directions by starting in the center with ourselves.

Consider the following illustration. Imagine you are standing in the center. You can make a high impact. However, it will not happen by accident. You must become intentional. You must live with purpose while focusing on your performance as you develop your potential.

Note: Illustration and 10 Values are listed on the following pages.



Why we do what we do is about our *purpose*.

How we do what we do is about our *performance*.

What we do will determine our *potential*.

Where these three components overlap, you will achieve a
HIGH IMPACT.

10 Values of High Impact Leaders

1

THE VALUE OF VISION

Vision is the foundation of hope.

“When there’s hope in the future, there’s power in the present.” ~ Les Brown

2

THE VALUE OF MODELING

Someone is always watching you.

“Who we are on the inside is what people see on the outside.” ~ Mack Story

3

THE VALUE OF RESPONSIBILITY

***When we take responsibility,
we take control.***

“What is common sense is not always common practice.” ~ Stephen R. Covey

4

THE VALUE OF TIMING

It matters when you do what you do.

“It’s about doing the right thing for the right reason at the right time.” ~ Mack Story

5

THE VALUE OF RESPECT

To be respected, we must be respectful.

“Go See, ask why, and show respect”

~ Jim Womack

6

THE VALUE OF EMPOWERMENT

***Leaders gain influence by
giving it to others.***

“Leadership is not reserved for leaders.”

~ Marcus Buckingham

7

THE VALUE OF DELEGATION

***We should lead with questions
instead of directions.***

“Delegation 101: Delegating ‘what to do,’ makes you responsible. Delegating ‘what to accomplish,’ allows others to become responsible.”

~ Mack Story

8

THE VALUE OF MULTIPLICATION

None of us is as influential as all of us.

“To add growth, lead followers. To multiply, lead leaders.” ~ John C. Maxwell

9

THE VALUE OF RESULTS

Leaders like to make things happen.

“Most people fail in the getting started.”

~ Maureen Falcone

10

THE VALUE OF SIGNIFICANCE

Are you going to settle for success?

*“Significance is a choice that only
successful people can make.”*

~ Mack Story

Excerpt (Chapter 3 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Leadership® & Culture:
The 5 Components for Building High Performance Teams

THE IMPACT OF CULTURE

THOSE WHO WORK THERE WILL DETERMINE
WHO WANTS TO WORK THERE

“I think the most important and difficult thing is to create a culture in the organization where leadership is really important. It’s important for people in the company to realize that this is a growth-oriented company, and the biggest thing we have to grow here is you, because it’s you who will make this company better by your own growth. ~ Jim Blanchard

Listen to the voices of leaders who are losing the labor war:

- “We just can’t find any good people.”
As if...there aren’t any good or great people.
- “Due to the low unemployment rate, there just aren’t any good people left.”
As if...the only people who can be offered a job are those without a job.
- “In today’s labor market, those who want to work are already working.”
As if...those who are working at one place can’t decide to work at a different place.
- “When we do get good people, they won’t stay.”
As if...the problem is always with the people and never with their leaders.

One thing I know about leaders who make these and similar comments is this: Their culture is a competitive disadvantage. Someone else has the advantage and is winning the battle for the good and great people. The good and great people certainly aren't out of work wishing they had a job. They're working someplace else.

Until a leader is aware of the problem, they can't address the problem. In case it's not obvious, the problem is their culture. The leader owns this problem whether they want to or not. Every time I hear these comments, and I hear them a lot, I know I'm talking to a leader who doesn't know what they don't know.

Ria and I hear leaders across varying blue-collar and white-collar industries repeatedly making these comments as we travel across the USA speaking on leadership development. These voices seem to be getting louder and louder. In fact, these voices are an inspiration for this book.

There are many leaders in blue-collar industries needing help. I want to help them stop searching for good people and start attracting great people. The transformation won't happen overnight. However, until it starts happening, it's not going to happen. My intention is to use this book to raise awareness while providing a transformational road map for those leaders who want to make their culture their greatest competitive advantage.

We were speaking in Louisville, KY recently to owners of blue-collar organizations. Afterward, one approached and said, "There isn't a magic pill is there? I think we all hoped there was." I replied, "No sir. There isn't a magic pill or an easy button. This is how you build a high performance team and an exceptional culture that will attract, retain, and support them. There is no other way."

Your culture is always attracting certain types of people and repelling others. Who we are is who we attract. This principle applies to individuals as well as organizations. The culture within your organization is negatively or positively impacting those within the organization, and some who are outside the organization.

The key point is to understand the people inside your organization are constantly providing the most influential type of advertising about your organization and the leaders within it. It's called word of mouth advertising. How your team is feeling inside the organization will determine what they're saying outside the organization.

If what they're saying about their leaders and the organization to others is good, it'll be easier to find good people. If what they're saying is great, it'll be easier to attract great people. But, if what they're saying is bad, finding good people will be hard, if not impossible.

Remember the voices at the start of this chapter? Those leaders had team members who were sharing bad word of mouth advertising about the organization. Unless those leaders choose to change, nothing will change.

Common sense reveals it's easier to win the labor war while attracting great people instead of searching for good people. However, what's common sense isn't always common practice. Often, it takes uncommon sense to act on things that are commonly understood. Creating an organizational culture that will attract and retain great people requires leaders with uncommon sense.

The best led companies aren't impacted by labor shortages because they're consistently attracting the best and the brightest people to their organizations.

“If we lose sight of people, we lose sight of the very purpose of leadership.” ~ Tony Dungy

Excerpt (Trait 4 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Leadership® & Teamwork:
30 Traits of High Impact Players

BE RESPONSIBLE

MAKING THIS CHOICE GIVES YOU A VOICE

“Total responsibility for failure is a difficult thing to accept, and taking ownership when things go wrong requires extraordinary humility and courage.”

~ Jocko Willink

The higher we climb up the organizational chart or the higher we climb up the pay scale, the harder it is for many of us to remain humble. However, as high impact team players, it's our responsibility to choose to be humble regardless of our status or income. And if necessary, it's also our responsibility to learn what it truly means to be humble.

Humility is a choice that high impact players will make.

If you haven't accomplished much or done much, it's a little easier to remain humble. I believe as a whole the blue-collar workforce is naturally more humble simply because of who we are and where we come from. However, I also believe some who climb their way up from the entry-level positions let it go to their heads.

I want to remain a humble high impact player. That's on me. Not letting my success go to my head is my responsibility. I've also gone a step farther and made helping others do the same my responsibility. High impact team players always do more than is required.

Each of us is responsible for choosing our values and

those values will determine our circumstances and the impact we have, especially when it comes to teamwork.

Just as humility is sometimes a hard choice for those with a high position or status, taking responsibility is often a hard choice for those in a low position or status. But as I've learned over the years, taking responsibility seems to be a hard choice for many regardless of their title, position, rank, status, or income.

When it comes to teamwork, low impact players dodge responsibility like it's a deadly disease. They may disappear when the task is being addressed or begin to make excuses as to why they can't help and shouldn't be asked to help. That creates distrust.

High impact players know a secret: When low impact players are whining, it's easy to start shining. They also know how to shine. It's actually pretty simple. They just listen for whining, and then step up and say, "I'll do it."

At that moment, the high impact player builds trust by simply taking the responsibility. The next responsibility of the high impact player is to follow through and get results. If they don't, they will create distrust with the team and the leaders. If they do, they will build additional trust with the team and the leaders.

Leaders are ultimately responsible for making things happen. If they don't make things happen, it won't be long before they are replaced by someone else who will be given the same mission. High impact players know the quickest way to build trust with a leader is to help them get results, so that's what they focus on doing.

As they develop a reputation for helping the leaders get results, their influence increases with those leaders. Because of their choice (taking responsibility and following through), they earn a voice. As time passes, the high impact players are asked their opinions much more

often than the low impact players.

As a result, the high impact players begin to influence the leader's choices and the team's direction. They're still on the team, but they're playing at much higher level. Those who are willing to make things happen are also given more chances to make things happen.

High impact players are never just along for the ride. They want to drive. They see the big picture. They don't shy away from responsibility. They wake up everyday looking for an opportunity to shine.

Imagine a team full of low impact players where everyone is dodging responsibility on every front. The leader will be frustrated, and the team will be frustrated. And little, if anything, will get accomplished. Unfortunately, these types of teams are common. Depending on your circumstances, it may be too easy to imagine this team. If so, don't miss what's right in front of you: endless opportunities to shine.

Now imagine a very different team, one filled with high impact players. They could be given the exact same mission as the frustrated low impact team. However, no one would be frustrated. The mission would be accomplished. Instead of being focused on finding excuses, the entire team would be focused on finding a way to make it happen. In that case, everyone shines.

What's the major difference between the two teams above? Attitude. Low impact players tend to have a negative attitude. High impact players always have a positive attitude. Attitude is a choice. If we can choose to be positive or negative, why not choose to be positive.

“Responsibility includes two important ideas – choosing right over wrong and accepting ownership for one’s conduct and obligations.” ~ Charles G. Koch

Excerpt (Ch. 5 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Leadership®:
Leading from the Front Lines

THERE IS AN “I” IN TEAM

EVERY TEAM IS MADE OF “I”NDIVIDUALS

“I’m just a plowhand from Arkansas, but I have learned how to hold a team together – how to lift some men up, how to calm others down, until finally they’ve got one heartbeat together as a team. There’s always just three things I say: ‘If anything goes bad, I did it. If anything goes semi-good, then we did it. If anything goes real good, they did it.’ That’s all it takes to get people to win.” ~ Paul “Bear” Bryant

Paul “Bear” Bryant was one of the greatest college football coaches to ever lead a team of young men down the field. He was also a “plowhand” from Arkansas. A blue-collar worker. The blue-collar world has produced some of the greatest leaders of all time, so you should be proud and hold your head high. *Without them, the world as we know it would not exist.*

There’s nothing holding you back but you. As my blue-collar friend, Donovan Weldon, stated so well, *“The only person between you and success is you. MOVE! The only person between you and failure is you. STAND FIRM!”* Those are strong words of wisdom. Donovan started on the bottom just like you and me. But today, he’s the CEO of Donovan Industrial Service in Orange, TX near Beaumont.

Donovan’s success didn’t happen by accident. He made it happen. You can make things happen too! He’s a blue-collar leader that believes in and develops his team on a regular basis. I know because my wife, Ria, and I had the privilege of being brought in to speak to his team about leadership in 2014. They are making it happen on purpose for a purpose!

It’s time for you to stop playing small and start playing tall.

A college degree is not required for you to play at a higher level. Not having one is simply an excuse some people use to continue playing small. If you want a college degree, use what you will learn on these pages to find a way to get one. If you don't want a college degree, use what you learn on these pages to make it happen without one.

You are the key to your success. You must believe in yourself. You must grow and develop yourself, which is what you're doing as you read this book. Do not stop growing! And when the time is right, you must bet on yourself.

Understanding your role as a team member is another must. Those on the front lines often underestimate themselves because they can't see the big picture. They can't see the value they have to offer. Far too often, their boss isn't a high impact leader and needs a lot of growth and development too. Bosses are often given the title without any formal development.

When I write about the front lines on these pages, I'm not only talking about the people in entry level positions. They are obviously on the front lines, but they also have leaders that are on the front lines with them and various team members supporting them too. They can all learn from these pages.

This book was written specifically for anyone at any level that visits, interacts with, or works on the front lines.

The principles I share with you must be applied if you want to make a high impact and be recognized for leading from the front lines. Regardless of your position, the more you apply these principles, the more options you will have, and the more positions you will be offered as you climb even higher.

Teams are made up of "I"ndividuals, so there are many I's on every team, regardless of how many times you hear, *"There is no I in TEAM."* As a matter of fact, *you are one of them.* Every person on a team is an "I" and has the potential to lead (influence) the team, positively or negatively.

"Leadership is influence. Nothing more. Nothing less."

~ John C. Maxwell

You must understand there are many official and unofficial teams in the organization where you work. They are very dynamic and constantly changing.

When most of us think of which team we are on, we immediately think of our peers, the ones on the same crew, in the same department, or working on the same job. This is our core team, but it only represents the smallest team we're on. We also support other teams too, as others support our team.

When we choose to contribute beyond our immediate team, we are choosing to be part of a bigger team. Often, this only requires a choice to do so. Your choice to get involved in other areas sends a clear message to the high impact leaders.

When you play tall, you choose to contribute because you know it will increase your influence and your impact on the front lines. If you want to play tall, you should want to be noticed, to be selected, to volunteer, to share information, to accept more responsibility, and ultimately, to make a contribution at a higher level.

As a direct result of your choice to step up, your influence increases. You're demonstrating you can lead from the front lines and will be seen and respected by all high impact leaders as a high impact leader. Your actions will not go unnoticed.

When you play small, you choose not to contribute because you don't want to do more. If your goal is to coast until pay day, it won't be a secret you can keep. When you make every effort not to be noticed, not to be selected, not to volunteer, not to share information, not to accept responsibility, and ultimately to not contribute, *you will absolutely be noticed.*

As a direct result of your choice not to step up, your influence decreases. Your influence on the front lines and with your leaders will be diminished. You are more likely to become reactive and frustrated blaming others for what you have chosen. Blaming others will further reduce your influence.

You first make your choices, then your choices make you.

“The most valuable player is the one that makes the most players valuable.” ~ Peyton Manning

Excerpt (Ch. 4 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Leadership® & Supervision:
Unleash Your Team's Potential

UNDERSTANDING ARTIFICIAL INFLUENCE

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOMEONE RESPECTING YOUR POSITION AND SOMEONE RESPECTING YOU

“Into the hands of every individual is given a marvelous power for good or evil - the silent, unconscious, unseen influence of his life. This is simply the constant radiation of what man really is, not what he pretends to be.”

~ William George Jordan

If you want to begin to lead beyond your position, you must be respected by those you want to influence. No one gives you respect. You can demand respect all day long, but it's a waste of time. I always laugh (on the inside) when I hear someone demand respect. You will never be respected because you demand to be respected, at work or at home. It's simply not going to happen.

Think about it from your own point of view. If there's a boss or manager you don't like because of who they are as a person, can they demand respect from you and get it? Absolutely not. You may respect their position. But, you will never respect them simply because they demand it. You *must* respect their position to *keep* your job. But, you don't have to respect *them* to keep your job.

A position will give you authority but not influence. Influence must be earned by first earning respect. The more you are respected the more influence you will gain. Everything I'm sharing in this book, *if applied*, will help you earn respect and increase your influence with others.

Having a position or title such as Mom, Dad, Coach, Boss, Supervisor, Manager, VP, President, CEO, Owner, etc. gives you authority and control over other people. I call this *artificial influence*. Artificial influence creates the *illusion* that you have *real* influence. However, if you choose to influence people using only artificial influence, you are not leading. You are simply managing. Sure you may accomplish a lot, but what are you leaving on the table?

You can easily validate the principle of artificial influence by considering those bosses you've had, or now have, that you would never follow if they didn't control your pay, your time off, your promotions, etc. If you only follow a boss because you *have to*, their influence is *not* real. It's artificial. And unfortunately for the company, most likely, you will only do what you have to do.

The title of boss is one that is simply given, often by another manager with artificial influence. However, when it comes to real influence, managers are not in the same league as leaders. If you develop real influence based on character-based principles that you have internalized, then you will *earn* the right to lead. When you do, those reporting to you will do much *more than they have to* simply because they *respect* you.

A high impact leader operates from a position of real influence, not artificial influence or authority.

Listen to the voices of those with *artificial* influence:

- How am I supposed to make something happen when those people don't report to me?
- I can't make them do anything. They don't report to me and won't do anything I tell them to do.
- I can't get anything done in that department. They report to someone else, not me. It's useless to try.
- How can I be responsible for their results when they don't report to me?
- If you want me to make it happen, you've got to give me authority over those people.
- My hands are tied. They don't report to me.

Phrases like those are always spoken by a manager, never

by a leader. I've heard them spoken many times in my career by managers who don't have a clue about leadership. The only influence they have at work is directly tied to the authority, *artificial influence*, which is associated with the position they hold. Without it, they wouldn't accomplish much of anything.

I remember being in a facility as a consultant once. I needed some help from a few team members in a different department, so I asked the manager I was working with if it would be okay if I went over and asked them for some help. He said, "*You'll have to wait. I'll have to get an interpreter because none of them speak English.*" I said, "*Okay, I'll go wait over there.*" I thought it was interesting. When I got there, they all spoke English to me. Leadership is influence.

Managers make things happen with people who *have to* help them. Leaders make things happen with people who *want to* help them.

Most managers have never read a leadership book and can't understand a leader doesn't need authority to make something happen. Leaders only need *influence* to make something happen. Leadership is *not* about who *has* to help you. Leadership is about who *wants* to help you.

Research studies have repeatedly shown a 40% productivity increase when comparing people who *want to* follow a leader with those who *have to* follow a manager.

A manager thrives on artificial influence and is not interested in developing himself or others in order to capture this massive loss of productivity. That's what leaders do, not managers.

How do you influence? What is your style? Are you a director or a connector? Do you tell or sell? What would change if you had more real influence in every situation?

"When we look at people who disobey their leaders, the first question we ought to ask is not, 'What's wrong with those people?' but rather, 'What's wrong with their leader?'

It says that responsibility begins at the top."

~ Malcolm Gladwell

Excerpt (Ch. 26 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Kaizen:
Leading Lean & Lean Teams

LEVERAGE THE TEAM

**FOCUS ON STRENGTHS;
DEVELOP WEAKNESSES**

“Instead of focusing on weaknesses, give your attention to people’s strengths. Focus on sharpening skills that already exist. Compliment positive qualities. Bring out the gifts inherent in them. Weaknesses can wait unless they are character flaws. Only after you have developed a strong rapport with the person and they have begun to grow and gain confidence should you address areas of weakness...and then those should be handled gently and one at a time.”

~ John C. Maxwell

High impact Lean leaders have a gift for turning a group of people into a team in a short period of time.

At the start of a kaizen event, calling the group of people a team is a poor use of the word team. They are simply a group of people assembled in a room about to be given a task to accomplish together. Most often, some want to be there, and some don’t want to be there. Odds are, this specific group of people has never worked together on a project before.

Knowing about continuous improvement is a must if you’re going to lead a kaizen event. However, knowing about continuous improvement (your competency) will not be the key to turning a group of people into a team of people. Turning a group of people into a team of people

is about having respect for the people. Your ability to quickly build a strong, functional team will be determined primarily by your character and secondarily by your competency. Your character is key in this area.

I've seen some very talented Lean leaders and others who have an extensive in-depth knowledge of Lean attempt to lead kaizen events. Most often, they struggle from the moment the event kicks off until the end. They know a lot about Lean but very little about leading people effectively. Why? Because their focus has been on learning Lean, not on learning leadership.

When it comes to growing, developing, and creating a new team, high impact Lean leaders know to focus on the team member's strengths in their area of competency and to develop their weaknesses in the area of character.

Each team member's competency strengths (what they know and can do), if leveraged, will launch the team forward. Each team member's character weaknesses (who they are) will hold the team back. This includes you.

High impact Lean leaders know there are always character issues. We all have them. A few of us are constantly working to improving ourselves, but many of us aren't. Focusing on character weaknesses is why high impact Lean leaders blend leadership development and personal growth components into all of their continuous improvement initiatives.

This is why I utilize the 20/80 rule I taught you in chapter 19. I didn't start using it by accident. I started using it by design. Until then, I only focused on leveraging the team's strengths. But, I hadn't been focused on developing their weaknesses. I'm sure you already know the root cause of most major problems that arise during kaizen events, whether with team members or people not on the team, is rooted in character issues.

The majority of Lean leaders focus only on the continuous improvement (competency) component of Lean. As a result, they provide no leadership in the area that will hold them and the team back the most, character development.

The reason Lean leaders do not address character development during kaizen events is because many of them are not addressing it in their own lives. In other words, because they are not leading themselves well, they cannot lead others well. Character development is always the missing link personally and professionally.

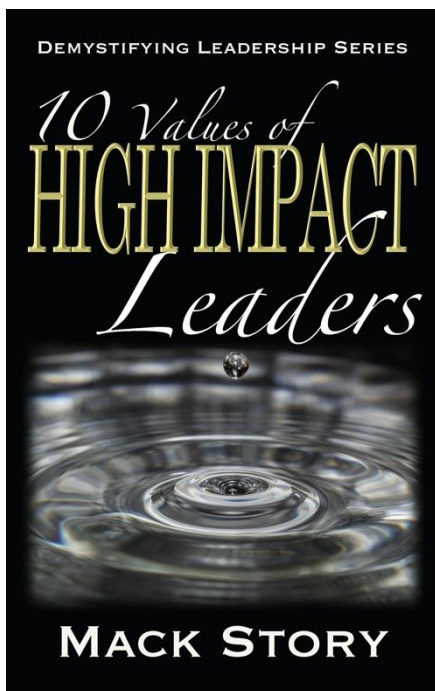
In the area of competency, ask questions and generate discussions to find out what people like or don't like to do. Don't assume they like to do what they are paid to do. I always have everyone introduce and speak about themselves before I talk about anything. I ask what their job is, how long they have been with the organization, what their previous job was, what their hobbies are, what they do for fun, how much Lean and event experience they have, and I ask them to tell me about their family.

The answers to these questions and the associated discussions allow me to connect and learn about their strengths. Then, I'm positioned to leverage the team.

“Humility means knowing and using your strength for the benefit of others, on behalf of a higher purpose. The humble leader is not weak, but strong...is not pre-occupied with self, but with how best to use his or her strengths for the good of others. A humble leader does not think less of himself, but chooses to consider the needs of others in fulfilling a worthy cause. We love to be in the presence of a humble leader because they bring out the very best in us. Their focus is on our purpose, our contribution, and our ability to accomplish all we set out to accomplish.” ~ Alan Ross

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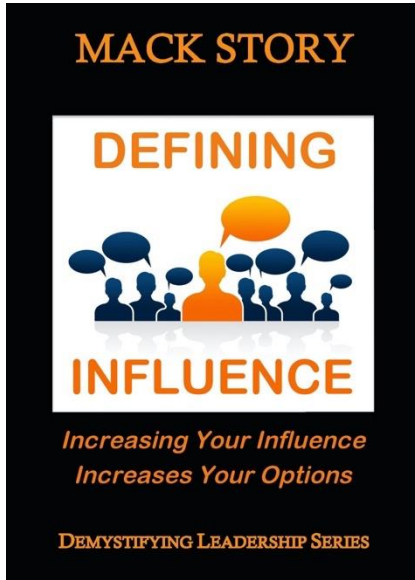
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High impact leaders align their habits with key values in order to maximize their influence. High impact leaders intentionally grow and develop themselves in an effort to more effectively grow and develop others.

These *10 Values* are commonly understood. However, they are not always commonly practiced. These *10 Values* will help you build trust and accelerate relationship building. Those mastering these *10 Values* will be able to lead with speed as they develop 360° of influence from wherever they are.

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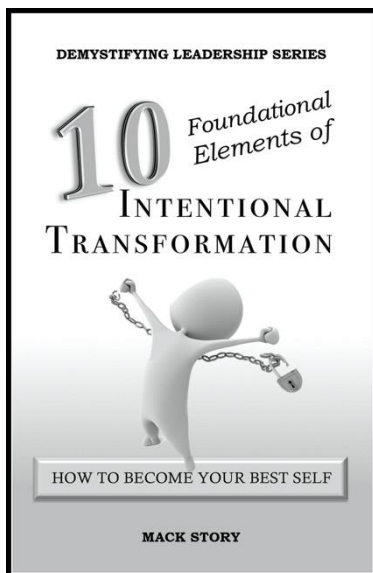
Are you looking for transformation in your life? Do you want better results? Do you want stronger relationships?

In *Defining Influence*, Mack breaks down many of the principles that will allow anyone at any level to methodically and intentionally increase their positive influence.

Mack blends his personal growth journey with lessons on the principles he learned along the way. He's not telling you what he learned after years of research, but rather what he learned from years of application and transformation. Everything rises and falls on influence.

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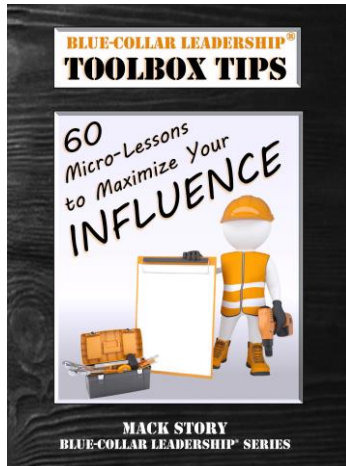
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[*10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation*](#) serves as a source of motivation and inspiration to help you climb your way to the next level and beyond as you learn to intentionally create a better future for yourself. The pages will ENCOURAGE, ENGAGE, and EMPOWER you as you become more focused and intentional about moving from where you are to where you want to be.

All of us are somewhere, but most of us want to be somewhere else. However, we don't always know how to get there. You will learn how to intentionally move forward as you learn to navigate the 10 foundational layers of transformation.

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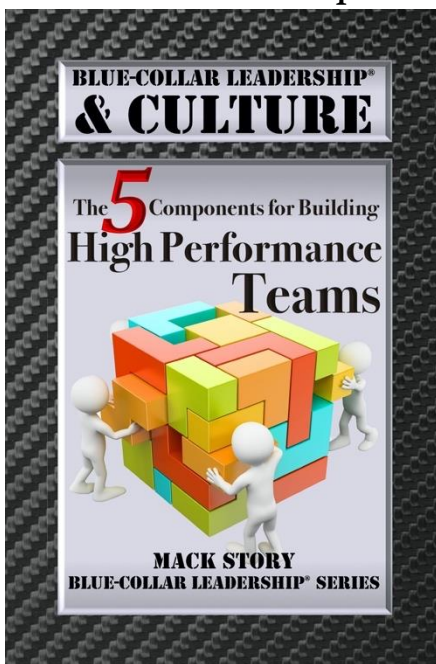
[Blue-Collar Leadership® Toolbox Tips](#) is filled with 60 micro-lessons intended to provoke thought and raise awareness.

These micro-lessons can be studied alone or introduced in a team or group setting to initiate growth and facilitate discussion. Each micro-lesson can be read in 1-2 minutes. However, additional group discussion is encouraged.

Each micro-lesson begins with a principle that, if applied, will help you increase your influence. Life is always better with more influence.

As you read each micro-lesson, look for ways to validate and reinforce what you're learning. Do this by reflecting on times when you or others got it right and gained influence or times when you or others got it wrong and lost influence.

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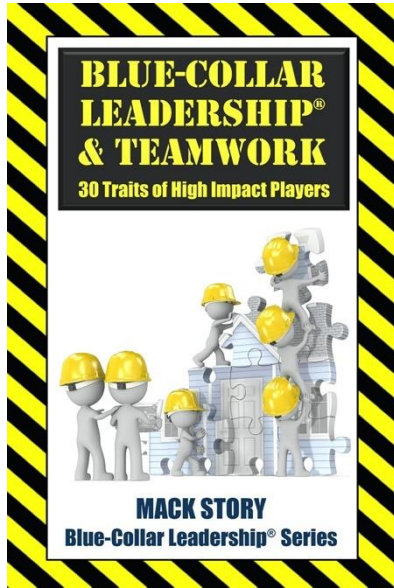
It's easier to compete when you're attracting great people instead of searching for good people.

Blue-Collar Leadership® & Culture will help you understand why culture is the key to becoming a sought after employer of choice within your industry and in your area of operation.

You'll also discover how to leverage the components of The Transformation Equation to create a culture that will support, attract, and retain high performance team members.

Blue-Collar Leadership® & Culture is intended to serve as a tool, a guide, and a transformational road map for leaders who want to create a high impact culture that will become their greatest competitive advantage.

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Are you ready to play at the next level and beyond?

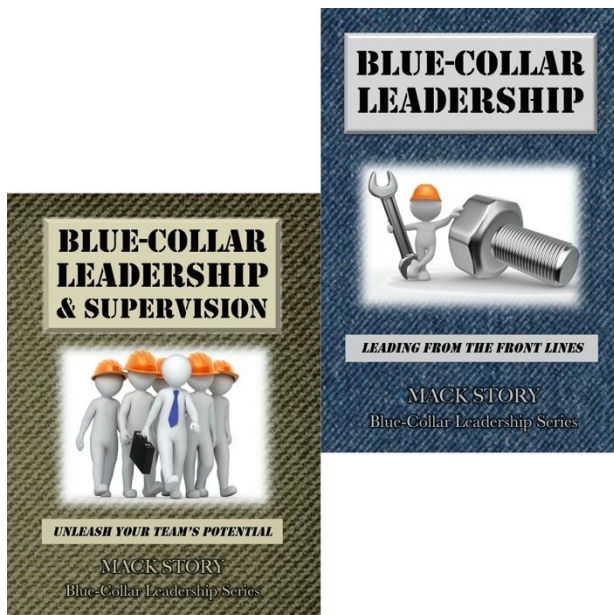
In today's high stakes game of business, the players on the team are the competitive advantage for any organization. But, only if they are on the field instead of on the bench.

The competitive advantage for every individual is developing 360° of influence regardless of position, title, or rank.

Blue-Collar Leadership® & Teamwork provides a simple, yet powerful and unique, resource for individuals who want to increase their influence and make a high impact. It's also a resource and tool for leaders, teams, and organizations, who are ready to Engage the Front Line to Improve the Bottom Line.

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"I wish someone had given me these books 30 years ago when I started my career on the front lines. They would have changed my life then.

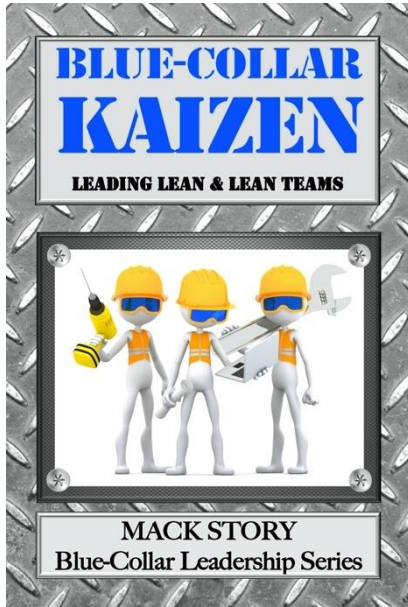
They can change your life now." ~ Mack Story

Blue-Collar Leadership® & Supervision and Blue-Collar Leadership® are written specifically for those who lead the people on the frontlines and for those on the front lines. With 30 short, easy to read 3 page chapters, these books contain powerful, yet simple to understand leadership lessons.

Note: These two Blue-Collar Leadership® books are the blue-collar version of the MAXIMIZE books and contain nearly identical content.

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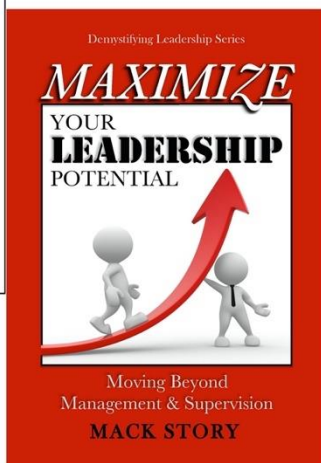
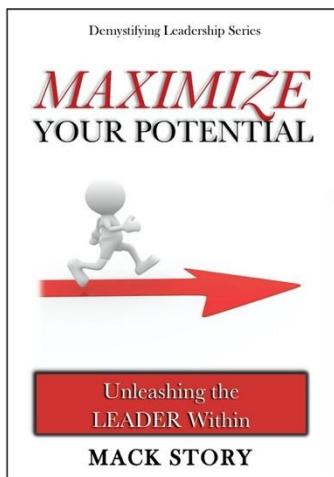
The biggest challenge in process improvement and cultural transformation isn't identifying the problems. It's execution: implementing and sustaining the solutions.

Blue-Collar Kaizen is a resource for anyone in any position who is, or will be, leading a team through process improvement and change. Learn to engage, empower, and encourage your team for long term buy-in and sustained gains.

Mack Story has over 11,000 hours experience leading hundreds of leaders and thousands of their cross-functional kaizen team members through process improvement, organizational change, and cultural transformation. He shares lessons learned from his experience and many years of studying, teaching, and applying leadership principles.

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"I wish someone had given me these books 30 years ago when I started my career. They would have changed my life then. They can change your life now." ~ Mack Story

MAXIMIZE Your Potential will help you learn to lead yourself well. *MAXIMIZE Your Leadership Potential* will help you learn to lead others well. With 30 short, easy to read 3 page chapters, these books contain simple and easy to understand, yet powerful leadership lessons.

Note: These two MAXIMIZE books are the white-collar, or non-specific, version of the Blue-Collar Leadership® books and contain nearly identical content.

ABOUT RIA STORY

Mack's wife, Ria, is also a motivational leadership speaker, author, and a world class coach who has a unique ability to help people develop and achieve their life and career goals, and guide them in building the habits and discipline to achieve their personal view of greatness. Ria brings a wealth of personal experience in working with clients to achieve their personal goals and aspirations in a way few coaches can.

Like many, Ria has faced adversity in life. Raised on an isolated farm in Alabama, she suffered extreme sexual abuse by her father from age 12 to 19. Desperate to escape, she left home at 19 without a job, a car, or even a high school diploma. Ria learned to be resilient, and not just survive, but thrive. (Watch her 7 minute TEDx talk at RiaStory.com/TEDx) She worked her way through school, acquiring an MBA with a 4.0 GPA, and eventually resigned from her career in the corporate world to pursue a passion for helping others achieve success.

Ria's background includes more than 10 years in healthcare administration, including several years in management, and later, Director of Compliance and Regulatory Affairs for a large healthcare organization. Ria's responsibilities included oversight of thousands of organizational policies, organizational compliance with all State and Federal regulations, and responsibility for several million dollars in Medicare appeals.

Ria co-founded Top Story Leadership, which offers leadership speaking, training, coaching, and consulting.

Ria's Story From Ashes To Beauty by Ria Story

The unforgettable story and inspirational memoir of a young woman who was extremely sexually abused by her father from age 12 to 19 and then rejected by her mother. ([Watch 7 minutes of her story in her TEDx talk at RiaStory.com/TEDx](http://RiaStory.com/TEDx))

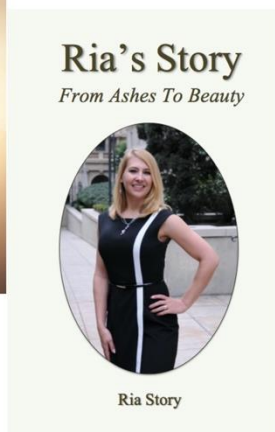
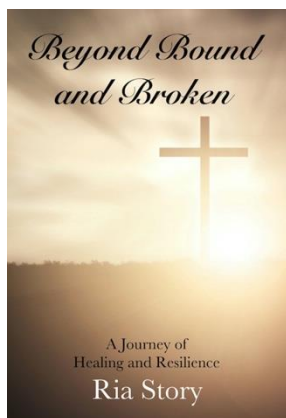
For the first time, Ria publicly reveals details of the extreme sexual abuse she endured growing up. 13 years after leaving home at 19, she decided to speak out about her story and encourage others to find hope and healing.

Determined to not only survive, but also thrive, Ria shares how she was able to overcome the odds and find hope and healing to Achieve Abundant Life. She shares the leadership principles she applied to find professional success, personal significance, and details how she was able to find the courage to share her story to give hope to others around the world.

Ria states, "It would be easier for me to let this story go untold forever and simply move on with life...One of the most difficult things I've ever done is write this book. Victims of sexual assault or abuse don't want to talk because they want to avoid the social stigma and the fear of not being believed or the possibility of being blamed for something that was not their fault. My hope and prayer is someone will benefit from learning how I was able to overcome such difficult circumstances. That brings purpose to the pain and reason enough to share what I would rather have left behind forever. Our scars make us stronger."

Available at Amazon.com in paperback, audio, and eBook. To order your signed copy, to learn more about Ria, or to book her to speak at your event, please visit: RiaStory.com/TEDx

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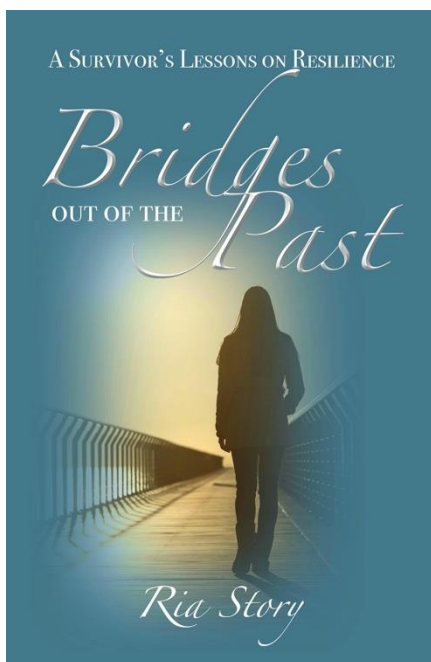


In *Beyond Bound and Broken*, Ria shares how she overcame the shame, fear, and doubt she developed after enduring years of extreme sexual abuse by her father. Forced to play the role of a wife and even shared with other men due to her father's perversions, Ria left home at 19 without a job, a car, or even a high-school diploma. This book also contains lessons on resilience and overcoming adversity that you can apply to your own life.

In *Ria's Story From Ashes To Beauty*, Ria tells her personal story of growing up as a victim of extreme sexual abuse from age 12 – 19, leaving home to escape, and her decision to tell her story. She shares her heart in an attempt to help others overcome their own adversity.

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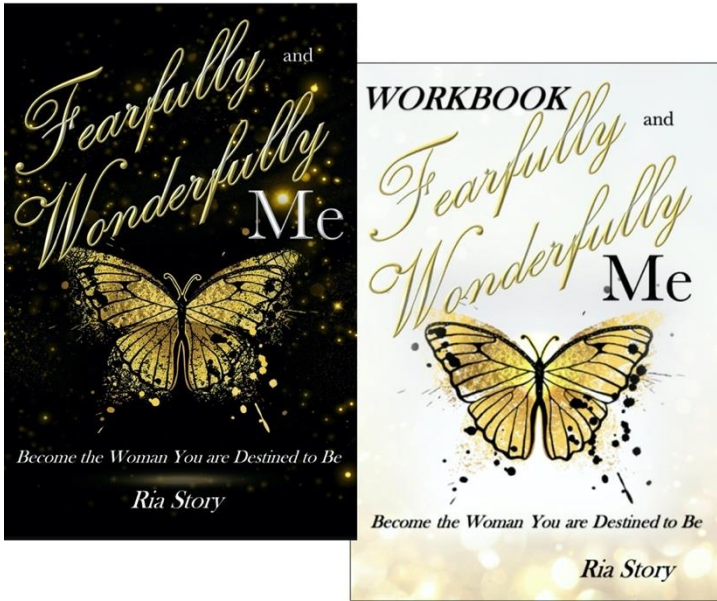
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It's not what happens to you in life. It's who you become because of it. We all experience pain, grief, and loss in life. Resilience is the difference between *"I didn't die,"* and *"I learned to live again."* In this captivating book on resilience, Ria walks you through her own horrific story of more than seven years of sexual abuse by her father. She then shares how she learned not only to survive, but also to thrive in spite of her past. Learn how to overcome challenges, obstacles, and adversity in your own life by building a bridge out of the past and into the future.

[Watch 7 minutes of her story at RiaStory.com/TEDx](https://www.riastory.com/TEDx)

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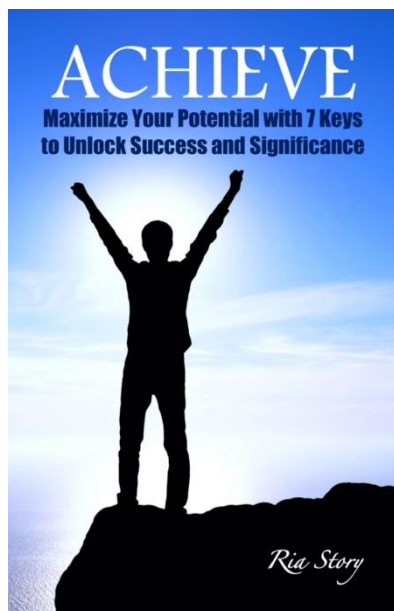


You have untapped potential to do, have, and be more in life. But, developing your potential and becoming the best version of yourself will require personal transformation. You will have to transform from who you are today into who you want to become tomorrow.

Gain unique insight in, "[*Fearfully and Wonderfully Me: Become the Woman You are Destined to Be*](#)" and the accompanying workbook to help you: believe in yourself and your potential; embrace your self-worth; overcome self-limiting beliefs; increase your influence personally & professionally; and achieve your goals & develop a mindset for success. These two resources will empower you to own your story, write a new chapter, and become the woman and leader you are destined to be.

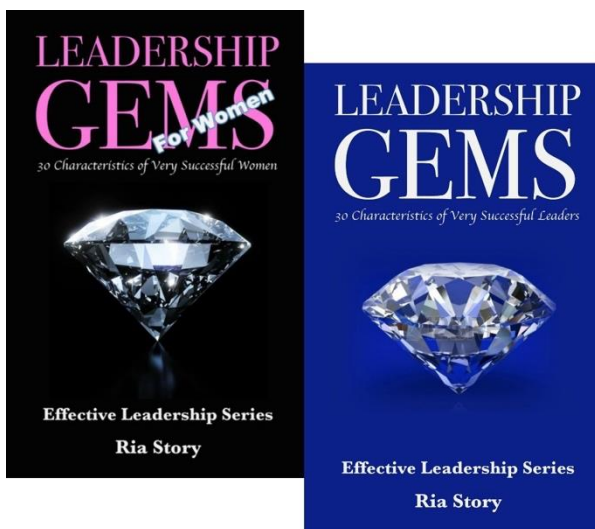
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You have untapped potential waiting to be unlocked. To be successful requires us to have knowledge of the principles of success, awareness of how to utilize them, and discipline to intentionally apply them. There are no shortcuts to success, but we can travel much faster when we have an achievement model we can apply. This model will help you develop more influence personally and professionally, execute an action plan for personal success, and maximize your potential in life. Both women and men alike will [find practical and relevant information to immediately apply](#) to their situation and improve the outcome.

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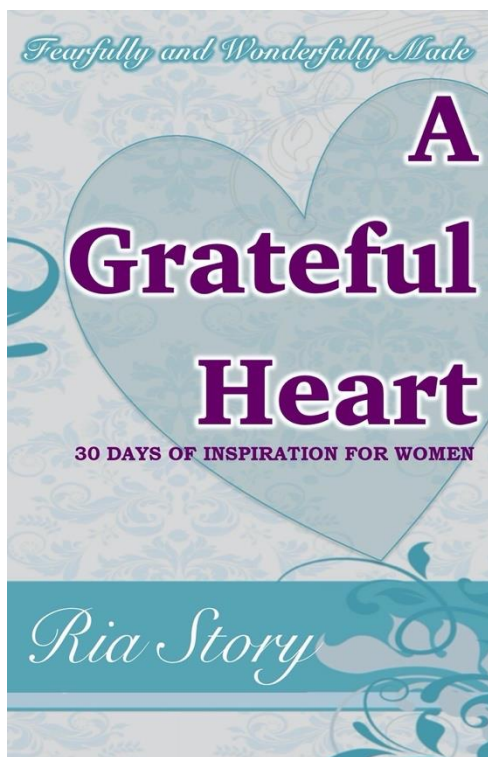
Note: Leadership Gems is the generic, non-gender specific, version of Leadership Gems for Women. The content is very similar.

Women are naturally high level leaders because they are relationship oriented. However, it's a “man's world” out there and natural ability isn't enough to help you be successful as a leader. You must be intentional.

Ria packed these books with [30 leadership gems which very successful people internalize and apply](#). Ria has combined her years of experience in leadership roles of different organizations along with years of studying, teaching, training, and speaking on leadership to give you these 30, short and simple, yet powerful and profound, lessons to help you become very successful, regardless of whether you are in a formal leadership position or not.

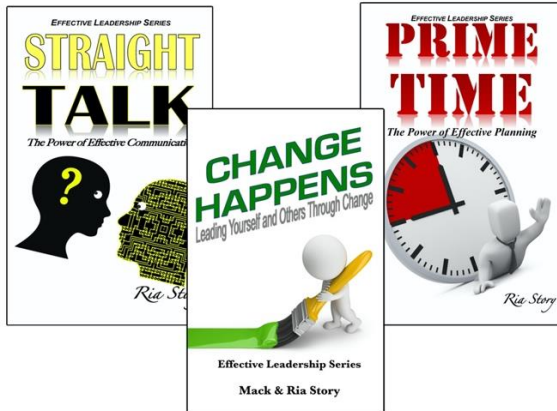
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Become inspired by this 30-day collection of daily devotions for women, where you will find practical advice on intentionally living with a grateful heart, inspirational quotes, short journaling opportunities, and scripture from God's Word on practicing gratitude.

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Ria's *Effective Leadership Series* books are written to develop and enhance your leadership skills, while also helping you increase your abilities in areas like communication and relationships, time management, planning and execution, leading and implementing change. Look for more books in the *Effective Leadership Series*:

- [*Straight Talk: The Power of Effective Communication*](#)
- [*PRIME Time: The Power of Effective Planning*](#)
- [*Change Happens: Leading Yourself and Others through Change*](#) (Co-authored by Ria & Mack Story)

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Want to order a copy for you and/or your entire team?

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Mack has also written [Blue-Collar Leadership®: Leading from the Front Lines](#), [Blue-Collar Leadership® & Supervision: Unleash Your Team's Potential](#), [Blue-Collar Leadership® & Teamwork: 30 Traits of High Impact Players](#), and [Blue-Collar Kaizen: Leading Lean and Lean Teams](#). As of 2021, [Mack](#) and his wife, [Ria](#), have published [32](#) books on leadership development and personal growth.

We spoke at Yale University's School of Management on the topic of *Blue-Collar Leadership®: Innovation in Talent Development*. [Watch the entire 1 hour presentation here.](#)

ENGAGE Your
FRONT LINE
To **IMPROVE** the
BOTTOM LINE!



If you're willing to invest in your
Blue-Collar team, I am too!

~Mack Story

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"My first words are, GET SIGNED UP! This training is not, and I stress, not your everyday leadership seminar!" Sam, VP & COO

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Top Story Leadership



Top Story Leadership simplifies foundational leadership principles into everyday language and easy to apply and understand concepts, so organizations and individuals can turn potential into reality. Mack and Ria Story are Certified Speakers and Trainers. They are published authors with more than 32 books available on leadership development, personal growth, and inspirational topics.

- Equip Organizational Leaders
- Encourage Positive Change
- Educate & Empower
- Engage the Front Line to Improve the Bottom Line

Leadership Speaking & Development

Leadership Made Simple

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- Cultural Change/Transformation
- Communication/Trust/Relationships
- Time Management/Planning/Execution



What clients have to say...

"My first words are, GET SIGNED UP! This training is not, and I stress, not your everyday leadership seminar! I have attended dozens and sent hundreds to the so-called 'Leadership-Training.' I can tell you that while all of the courses, classes, webinars, and seminars, had good intentions, nothing can touch what Mack and Ria Story provide. I just wish I had it 20 years ago!"

~ Sam McLamb, VP & COO, CMP

"We would highly recommend Mack and Ria as speakers...their presentation was inspirational, thought-provoking, and filled with humor. They taught us some foundational leadership principles."

~ Stephen, President-elect, WCR

"Mack and Ria understand people! The dynamic team made such an impact on our front line supervision that they were begging for more training! We highly recommend Mack and Ria!"

~ Rebecca, Director of Process Improvement, GKN



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mack's story is an amazing journey of personal and professional growth. He began his career in manufacturing on the front lines of a machine shop. He grew himself into upper management and found his niche in lean manufacturing and along with it, developed a passion for leadership development.

Mack has logged over 11,000 hours leading cross-functional blue-collar leaders and their teams through various types of process improvement, organizational change, and cultural transformation.

Mack is also the author of *Defining Influence*, *10 Values of High Impact Leaders*, *Change Happens*, *10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation*, *Maximize Your Potential*, *Maximize Your Leadership Potential*, and *Who's Buying You?*. He's an inspiration for people everywhere as an example of achievement, growth and personal development. His passion inspires people all over the world! [Listen to Audio Book samples here.](#)

A few highlights: In 2013, Mack participated in the Cultural Transformation of Guatemala with John C. Maxwell where more than 20,000 Guatemalan leaders were trained; In 2014, Les Brown invited Mack to speak at his event in Los Angeles, CA; In 2018, Mack was invited to speak at Yale University.

Contact Mack at 334-728-4143 or mack@mackstory.com for [Professional Leadership Development](#), [Keynote Speaking](#), and Cultural Enhancement/Transformation.

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Mack's wife, [Ria](#), is also an author and speaker with [an amazing personal story of overcoming seven years of extreme sexual abuse](#) by her father and others from age 12-19.

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